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Subject: New Eng J Med,19 Feb. 2004; Amer J Epi,15 Feb. 2004

Morning: In these two issues are several articles of interest. These articles of interest range from repro. to CVD. The New Engl J of Med contains articles in both categories. There is an original article starting on page 777 by Surkan et al and a perspectives piece starting on page 754 by Zhang and Klebanoff.. The group being studied (Surkan et al) was derived from Sweden. The major conclusion is that ' previous small-for-gestational-age infant is an important predictor of the subsequent risk of stillbirth, particularly if the infant was born preterm'. The authors controlled for maternal smoking, 'one of the strongest risk factors for fetal growth restriction'. The group studied included almost all births in Sweden during the study period. It is a very worthwhile study to read and consider in the consensus deliberations. In the perspective piece previously mentioned these authors provide additional insight and data focusing on fetal death as an outcome resulting from endpoints like those described in the Surkan article.. There is also an article in the section of the journal 'clinical implications of basic research' by Loscalzo that tries to place the role of ozone (environmental pollutant) as an atherogenic cause or determinat.. This very interesting piece may also be of interest to chemists and biomarker people. The author reviews other work reporting the generation of "atheronal"" which result from the aldolazation of cholesterol by ozone, producing 5,6-secoterol. A compound that can be cytotoxic and contributes to foam cell formation. This author believes that this reaction may afford not simply an additional mechanism underlying this pathology but possibly a biomarker. I leave these issues to the chemists, Ray and Teddie to figure out.. In the Amer J of Epidem. is an article possibly of interest to the repro. folks by jones et al (343-350). These authors report on the relationship between birthweight, length, childhood size and smoking with respect to bone fractures during growth.. The authors conclude that birthweight, maternal smoking, breast feeding and sports participation had no significant impact on fracture risk. They did report a remarkable finding (at least to me) tall and heavy children and teenagers who smoke were at increased bone fracture risk. I think that one can visualize a large tall adolescent doing something strenuous while smoking and falling but it is possible I'm missing something else? I have ,based on feedback from a reader, tried to pay somewhat more attention to the form and spelling of these reports. This has resulted I hope in a product that is still acceptable. I do appreciate feedback in part because it suggests to me that there is 'life' out there. As Always, Richard

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